



# Rock Talk

The Official Newsletter of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds

## President's Message



*Musings, Updates, and More from Club President - Judith Birx*

Fellow members of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, Our next meeting was scheduled to be held on Wednesday, September 8th 2021 at 7:00pm. The meeting has been postponed. See below.

The Withlacoochee Rockhounds Board of Directors met recently, by Zoom, and one of the topics of discussion was keeping our members safe at our meetings.

We have a significant number of our members who are snow-birds, and due to COVID they are still up north. This has led to a decrease in attendance at our recent meetings.

Given the two above issues, the Board decided that it would be prudent to suspend the September meeting. This keeps our members safe, and it will hopefully allow time for the Delta variant to wane.

We view this as a temporary situation. We will take this one step at a time.

The CDC has recommended that we wear our masks again even if we are vaccinated.

*Since we are following the CDC guidelines we may be requiring our members to wear their masks at the next club meeting!*

As always, we are following the current guidelines for the safety of all of us!

### This Month's Roundup of Stories

- President's Message
- Secretary's Report
- Turkey's Rarest Gems
- Pyrite Does Contain Gold
- Lapis Lazuli
- Bench Tips

Looking ahead, for our October meeting, Dave Davis will be doing a presentation on Flint Knapping. Be sure to attend.

Remember, our annual Gem Show is coming up soon.

The show will be held December 3rd, 4th and 5th. The Gem Show is a huge draw for lovers of gems and minerals, and a great resource for us to get the word out about our club.

We are still in need of volunteers to help with various duties at the show. Please be sure to contact myself or Ralph Barber to let us know you can help. Information about the Show, if you need it, and flyers you can download and print out are available on the club's website [HERE](#)

We will be having our 50/50 at the next meeting and I do want to express that the 50/50 is a way for our club to increase club funds as well as yours! So, be sure to play!!

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me, Judith Birx, at 352-587-1702. I want to thank you for your support!

Hope to see you at the next Meeting!

President Judith Birx

# Secretary's Report

*Minutes and More from Club Secretary - Melodye Steverson*

## *Withlacoochee Rockhounds Monthly Meeting*

Date 8/11/2021

### Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Judith Birx at 7pm.

We all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer.

There was 1 new member to recognize; Laura Mincey

There were no guests in attendance.

Roger Wheeler made a motion to accept the minutes of our July meeting as printed in the newsletter, Janet Wheeler seconded. Passed by all members.

Treasurer Janet Wheeler gave the Treasurer's report.

Janice Wojick made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report subject to audit. Seconded by Gary Spurlock.

Approved by all.

### *Old Business*

President Birx began her announcements by re-stating that our meetings will continue to be held under CDC guidelines:

Masks are mandatory, even if you have been vaccinated.

This is temporary.

We are not requiring you to show us your vaccine card to enter the building.

Use of hand sanitizer is advised.

Maintain Social distancing of six feet.

The meeting room will be sanitized before the meeting.

Gloves are recommended when handling money.

The state is not requiring you to wear a mask, however we are following the CDC guidelines.

If you are sick, please leave, or if you were in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid, please leave.

If you are in the high risk category, please consider not coming.

You are attending meetings and all activities associated with the Withlacoochee Rockhounds at your own risk.

### *New Business*

President Birx continued;

We have patches of the new logo. We ordered a few to see how they would look. They are for sale at \$15 each.

Tuesday of last week, the Board met in person to stuff the Gem Show dealer applications, address and stamp them. There were 78 mailed.

If you are interested renting a table, talk to Ralph, Janet or myself as soon as possible! Spots should fill up quickly. Next month we will start our volunteer list for the show. Consider how you can help!

Remember this is the only fundraiser for our club during the year and due to COVID, we were unable to have it last year. Please make sure to contribute some time to the Show.

The Senior Center finally decided to accept our donation of the UV lamp attachment for the AC unit.

Lynn Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Kris Gordon seconded, passed by all.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary  
Melodye Steverson

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*Withlacoochee Rockhounds Board of Directors*

*Meeting Minutes*

Date 8/23/2021

Attending Board members; Judith Birx, Mark Moore, Melodye Steverson, Janet Wheeler, Ralph Barber, Roberta Oldread, Ginny Steverson, Lynn Walters and Michael Steverson.

Continued on Page 10

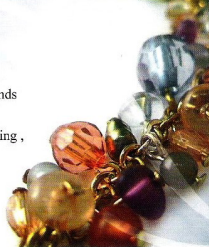


# Rockhounds Advertisers

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352-587-1702



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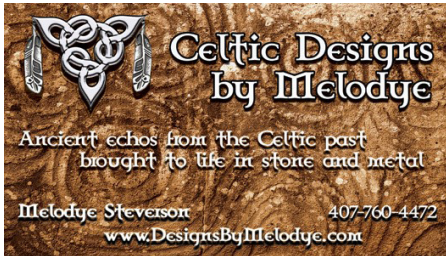
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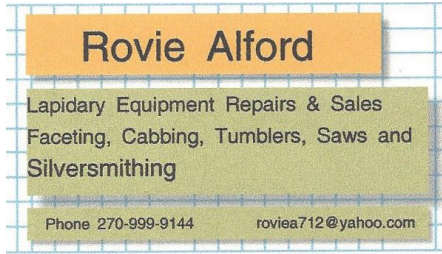
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**Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk**

The cost for non-club members to advertise their businesses in  
Rock Talk is \$10.00 per month.

Contact Michael Stevenson to set up an ad in both the newsletter and  
the club website. It will benefit both  
your business and our club.

If you ad has a web address, or Etsy shop address, I have linked to it.

**Advertisers Are Needed**

Please help us find advertisers for the Rock Talk and our website.  
The monthly income from these ads is beneficial to the club.  
Both the Rock Talk and our website have more exposure than only club members.  
Contact club treasurer Janet Wheeler: [ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com) or  
send to:  
Withlacoochee Rockhounds  
PO Box 5634 Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

# Tracking down Turkey's rarest and most fascinating gemstones

Lots of beautiful stones here...

Given Turkey's unique geography, which is spread across two continents and surrounded by four seas, coupled with vast mountain ranges and diverse climates, it should come as no surprise that the country is home to a number of natural wonders, including a variety of very rare and sought-after stunning gemstones.

While some are rarer than others, with a number that only exist in Turkey, there is no better time than now to cherish these precious finds and embrace them for their health and healing properties. Whether you don these semiprecious gemstones and minerals as jewelry or simply keep them close to you, each of these seven stones from Turkey has its own believed benefits that can help us get through these trying times.

Zultanite is a rare and more recently surfaced gemstone that is only found in Turkey and has become one of the most popular stones of the millennium for its color-changing properties. Also referred to as csarite or sultanite, zultanite is the world's rarest type of diaspore – a mineral named after the word diaspora, which in Greek means to scatter, in reference to the way the gemstone sparkles and reflects light. Considered to be 10 times as rare as diamonds, zultanite has only ever been found from one source: the Ilbir Mountains of Milas, located in Turkey's Aegean province of Muğla.

This is an excerpted portion of the article.

Read the entire article here at [DailySabah.com](http://DailySabah.com)



# Not so foolish after all! Pyrite, aka 'fool's gold' can actually contain tiny amounts of the real stuff

No foolin'!

Though long derided as 'fool's gold,' pyrite might actually contain trace amounts of the precious metal that could be extracted through environmentally friendly means.

Researchers at Curtin University and the University of Western Australia, both in Perth, and the China University of Geoscience in Wuhan reported on the 'invisible' gold in pyrite in a new research published in the journal *Geology*.

'Previously gold extractors have been able to find gold in pyrite either as nanoparticles or as a pyrite-gold alloy, but what we have discovered is that gold can also be hosted in nanoscale crystal defects, representing a new kind of 'invisible' gold,' lead author Denis Fougereuse, a geologist from Curtin's School of Earth and Planetary Sciences, said in a statement.

The more deformed the crystal is, the more gold there is locked up in defects. The gold is hosted in nanoscale defects called dislocations – 100,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair.' The gold in pyrite has been long overlooked, Fougereuse explained, because it's only observable via atom probe tomography (APT), a technology which uses a position-sensitive detector to deduce atoms' location.

Read the entire article here at [TheDailyMail](#)

*If perfected, the method could be used to extract 'invisible gold' from other minerals.*



# Withlacoochee Rockhounds

## Membership Form 2021

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**Annual Dues:** New individual member, \$25.00. Under 18 years of age, \$5.00. No charge for paid 2020 members who are renewing for 2021. Returning members from 2019, \$20.00 (\$5.00 discount) for 2021 membership

Check if returning member

Check if current member  
with change of information

Check if new member

Check if under 18

**Please Print Clearly**

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone Number (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

You may now fill in the fields on this form if you are viewing it on your computer or tablet. Each field may be clicked on and then you may type in your information. You will still need to print out the form, but your added information should show on the

**Give this completed form along with your check for dues made out to "Withlacoochee Rockhounds" to club secretary Janet Wheeler at a club meeting. Or mail the form and your check to:**

**Withlacoochee Rockhounds  
PO Box 5634  
Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634**

**Renewing 2020 members : No charge for 2021 membership. Please fill out form and give it to club secretary Janet Wheeler or send it to the above address.**

2021

# Long-lost fragment of Stonehenge reveals rock grains dating to nearly 2 billion years ago

Now that's some old rocks!

A long-lost piece of Stonehenge that was taken by a man performing restoration work on the monument has been returned after 60 years, giving scientists a chance to peer inside a pillar of the iconic monument for the first time.

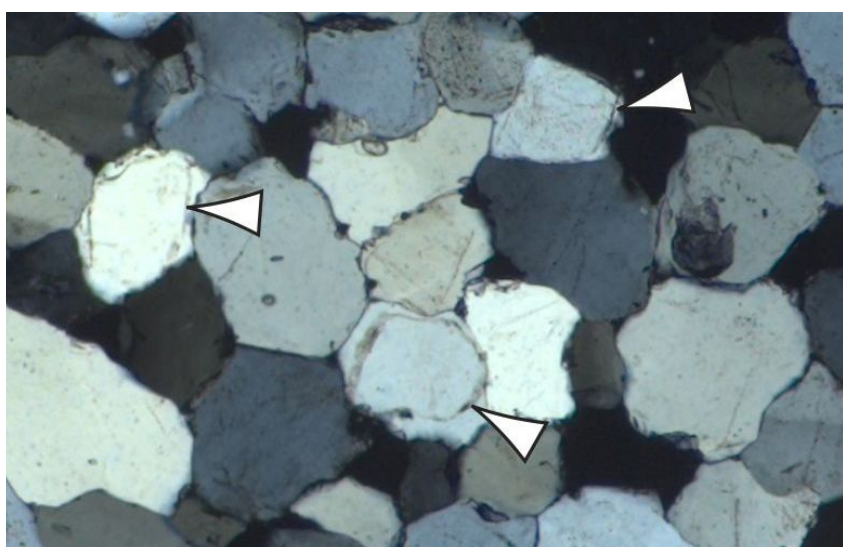
In 1958, Robert Phillips, a representative of the drilling company helping to restore Stonehenge, took the cylindrical core after it was drilled from one of Stonehenge's pillars — Stone 58. Later, when he emigrated to the United States, Phillips took the core with him. Because of Stonehenge's protected status, it's no longer possible to extract samples from the stones. But with the core's return in 2018, researchers had the opportunity to perform unprecedented geochemical analyses of a Stonehenge pillar, which they described in a new study.

They found that Stonehenge's towering standing stones, or sarsens, were made of rock containing sediments that formed when dinosaurs walked the Earth. Other grains in the rock date as far back as 1.6 billion years.

This is an excerpted portion of the article.

Read the entire article here at [LiveScience.com](https://www.livescience.com)

*Some of the sand grains formed as long ago as 1 billion to 1.6 billion years ago*



# Lapis Lazuli's Royal Blue Color Was Once Considered Godlike

This prized material has been used to adorn great works of art from pharaohs' coffins to the Sistine Chapel, and it's also touted for its connection to "cosmic wisdom" and use in feng shui. In fact, it was once more precious than gold.

We're talking, of course, about brilliant blue lapis lazuli, which can be found on King Tut's coffin and other funeral items. In crushed form, it became the bluest blue in an artist's palette — ultramarine — so expensive that Michelangelo couldn't afford it.

Read the entire article at [HowStuffWorks](#)



**Withlacoochee Rockhounds**

Our monthly club meeting is held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Club, 3357 Susan Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34606, on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM



[www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com](http://www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com)

**Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk**

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**Advertisers Needed**

Please help us find advertisers for the Rock Talk and our website. The club can use the monthly income. Both the Rock Talk and our website have more exposure than only club members

Contact club treasure Janet Wheeler: [ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com) or send to: Withlacoochee Rockhounds, PO Box 5634, Spring Hill, FL 34611-6634

**Withlacoochee Rockhounds**

**Purpose**

We are a non-profit organization whose purpose is to foster interest and promote knowledge of minerals, gems, fossils, lapidary arts, and earth sciences, through regular meetings, informative programs, workshops, and field trips. PLUS, our annual gem, mineral and jewelry show.

Membership is open to anyone sharing such interests.

**Dues**

Dues are \$25.00 annually for adults, and \$5.00 for children under 18 years of age.

**Club Meeting Location and time**

Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center, 3357 Susan Dr in Spring Hill. The meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00PM

**2021 Club Officers and Appointees**

President	Judith Birx	352.587.1702	<a href="mailto:judithbirx@hotmail.com">judithbirx@hotmail.com</a>
Vice President	Mark Moore	352.586.9607	<a href="mailto:markles2021@gmail.com">markles2021@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Melodye Steverson	352.683.9496	<a href="mailto:melodye@designsbymelodye.com">melodye@designsbymelodye.com</a>
Treasurer	Janet Wheeler	727.938.3644	<a href="mailto:ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com">ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com</a>
Rock Talk Editor	Michael Steverson	407.376.5570	<a href="mailto:highlander56@gmail.com">highlander56@gmail.com</a>
Club Webmaster	Michael Steverson	407.376.5570	<a href="mailto:highlander56@gmail.com">highlander56@gmail.com</a>
Mailing Reporter	Janet Wheeler	727.938.3644	<a href="mailto:ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com">ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com</a>
Gem Bag Coordinator	Gloria DuPont	352.848.5199	<a href="mailto:ddupont@tampabay.rr.com">ddupont@tampabay.rr.com</a>
Audio/Visual Coordinator	Michael Steverson	407.376.5570	<a href="mailto:highlander56@gmail.com">highlander56@gmail.com</a>

**Board of Directors**

Judith Birx (President)	Mark Moore (Vice President)	Melodye Steverson (Secretary)	Janet Wheeler (Treasurer)
Roberta Oldread (2020)	Lynn Walters (2021)	Ginny Steverson (2021)	Michael Steverson (2021 appointed)
			Ralph Barber (Past President)



# Help Save William Holland School

For those of you that have not heard, the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts, aka William Holland Retreat, has decided to cancel their entire 2021 season due to the pandemic.

They plan to re-open for the 2022 season.

This school has meant a lot to many of our members over the years and now they are struggling to maintain their building and grounds without their normal revenue stream from students. If you're interested in helping, they have an auction every Tuesday and a sale on Wednesday. You can get slabs, cabochons, findings, tools, books and completed jewelry as well. These are on their Facebook pages. Just look up William Holland School on Facebook and I'm sure you can find them. They also offer videos of their teachers doing demos and classes, so you can learn from the site as well!

You can help the school and get great stuff at a good price at the same time. Check it out!



**Brad Smith's *Bench Tips* are a monthly feature of Rock Talk**

## JUST A DROP

Hobby shops and model airplane stores carry small plastic dispenser bottles that are handy for putting a drop of flux, oil, or glue just where you want it. They have a length of small metal tubing coming out the top that lets you squeeze out very small drops.

I use one with a short length of tubing for oil when I'm sawing or when drilling harder metals like steel. Another bottle I found in a plastics store has a longer length of metal tubing on it. Plastics people use them for dispensing fast drying glues to join pieces of acrylic. The long metal tube let's you reach into tight places. Either of these is handy for flux at the soldering station.



## FOREDOM MAINTENANCE

If you have a Foredom flexshaft, it makes sense to check it over every so often to be sure it's running properly. But how to do that? You've probably lost the little booklet that came with the unit. Well, being the good company it is, Foredom has put together an extensive set of videos on how to everything.

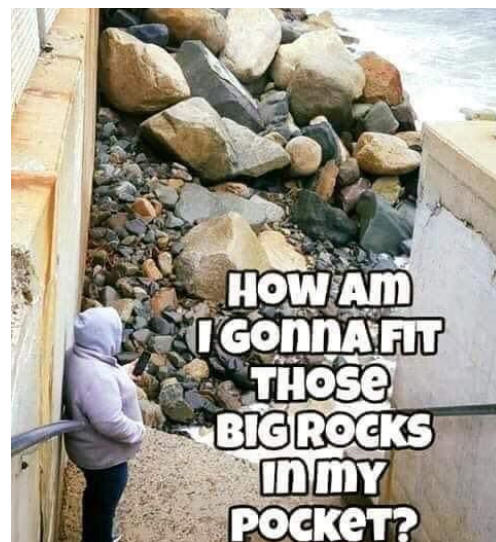
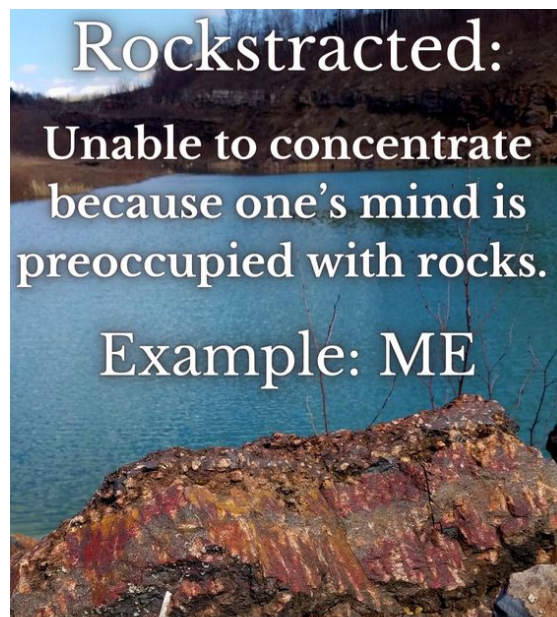
The series covers set-up, lubrication, replacing a sheath, motor maintenance, and handpiece maintenance. Few if any special tools are needed. You can watch the videos at [www.foredom.net/flexibleshaftmachinemaintenance.aspx](http://www.foredom.net/flexibleshaftmachinemaintenance.aspx) particularly under "Foredom Basics" or the "Foredom Shafting..." categories.

Any repair parts needed are available on the Foredom site or from most jewelry supply catalogs. If you have any question about their products, a phone call or an email will get quick answers.

Learn New Skills with Brad's "How To Do It" Books

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

# Rock Talk Funny Papers



## Secretary's Report - Continued from page 2

Board meeting started at 6:41pm and was held via the Internet on Zoom.

### NEW BUSINESS

President Birx opened the meeting by recognizing Board Member Lynn Walker who had asked to speak regarding the pandemic's effects on Hernando County and the surrounding area. Lynn spoke at length about escalating contagion and the massive drain on the medical community's resources. There was much discussion about the safety of having a meeting in September.

In the interest of safety for our members, President Birx made a motion to cancel the upcoming meeting on September 8th. Treasurer Janet Wheeler seconded, passed by majority. President Birx tasked Board member Michael Steverson with informing the club members by email.

### OLD BUSINESS

There was information sharing and general discussion about the Club's Gem Show coming in December and decisions were tabled until the next Board meeting.

Our next Board meeting will be in September, date TBA at 6:30pm, on ZOOM. Motion to adjourn made by Ralph Barber, seconded by Roberta Oldread, passed. The meeting ended at 7:41pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Melody Steverson



## From The Editor

### Hello to all Withlacoochee Rockhounds

It is I, your friendly neighborhood editor again.

If you would like to place a business card ad in the newsletter, please feel free to contact me, and we'll get you added to next available issue.

Additionally, if any of you have not received your newsletter or are not receiving my e-mail blasts (meetings, rock sales, etc.), *please* check your spam folder. If you still are not receiving them, please contact me and let's make sure I have your correct e-mail address.

As noted in previous issues of Rock Talk, I have created for the club a Google My Business account. Doing this, when someone searches for "lapidary clubs near me", or "rockhounds near me", we will come up in their search. Now that this is live, *I am asking again*, if you would, please search for "Withlacoochee Rockhounds", and when you see our listing to the right side of the page in Google, please use the "Write a Review" link and give the club a good review. It helps with search engine results. Which means more people find us, and we hopefully acquire new members. It's a win-win! Likewise, if you have not done so, [please subscribe to our YouTube Channel](#). YouTube is the second largest search engine on the internet. People are finding us by it.

As you will have seen in your e-mail regarding the next club meeting, and in the Presidents Message, September's meeting has been postponed. With a significant number of our members being snowbirds, and with the recent surge in the delta variant of COVID, we have decided to post pone the meeting to keep everyone safe. This is a temporary issue, and we hope to meet again in October. We continue to follow the latest CDC guidelines, and the CDC is advising that vaccinated AND non-vaccinated individuals wear facemasks when gathering indoors. We are wanting to keep everyone COVID-free. So, PLEASE wear your mask when you are attending the next meeting.

Our club is being updated and getting better every day, and we now have the new logo we spoke of in previous newsletters. I will be incorporating it into other club documents. In addition, we are researching how soon we can also have patches created with the new logo. With that new logo, I have created new t-shirts, and a tote bag for the club. As with the present shirts, these shirts are available on Amazon. I sent out an e-mail recently with the link to the new merch. You may also find the new shirts on our club website, on the [Club T-Shirts page](#). Get yourself some new club gear to wear! Look around the meeting, you will probably see a member wearing our new club gear!

Our Board would like our members to come up with suggestions for Programs to be presented at our monthly meetings. What would you like to see? What would you like to learn? What would you like to know? Is there something you'd like to teach or present? You can help our club expand it's educational repertoire. We'd love to hear from you all. Contact any Board member or bring your written suggestions to a meeting.

Rock On!!!

Club Phone Number - 352.587.2714

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### Warning to Withlacoochee Rockhound Members

*During the last several months, illicit requests have been sent to members of various clubs in the US, including the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, asking members to purchase gift cards that would be used as donations to various organizations.*

*These are SCAMS.*

*Be advised that our club has never and will never ask members to buy gift cards or provide any form of monetary funds to anyone or any organization by phone call, email, or any other method of communication.*